# Stages of team development essay sample

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Teams and teamwork are not new. There is much rhetoric on how to set up teams, while the process of teamwork has not been studied systematically. There is wider research on understanding teams at work that is dominated by a theoretical model approach, which considers the relationship between team inputs, processes and outputs.

There is substantial evidence and a growing body of research on the benefits for patient care and team members that can be gained from developing team working in mental health care. Despite such growing evidence there is very little to suggest that team development initiatives are being carried out in mental health settings. In order to develop team working in health care, it is important to do a full evaluation of the team and to identify its strengths and weaknesses(Bens, 1999).

Understanding how to create teams begins by understands that team processes vary according to the stage of their development and that their beginning requires particular consideration.

First is the forming stage, this is where team members gain self-awareness and seek acceptance from other members. They have a great need to adapt to the team or fit in at that point. They are enthusiastic and focused on role definition. During this honeymoon stage, members are excessively courteous and non-threatening despite feelings of anxiety. Team members note similarities and differences among themselves and form alliance and bonds. Members raise questions about the purpose of the team, available resources, time constraints, their roles and strengths and weaknesses of other members.

The second stage called storming is characterised by turbulence and stress, as members become more task oriented. Team resilience is tested as tensions build and trust becomes tenuous. Personality conflicts and hidden agendas also emerge. Goals are blurred and resolution depends on effective leadership. By providing clear direction and encouraging members to adopt specific roles the team leader focuses the group. Any issues left unresolved during this stage will re-emerge at a later stage.

The third team development stage is the norming stage. This occurs after initial conflicts have been resolved, roles accepted, and the strengths and limitations of team members acknowledged. As members feel less threatened, tensions decrease, allowing the team to focus on purposes and goals. Productivity increases and morale improves as the team becomes more confident in their common purpose (Alper & Tjosvold, 2000).

The fourth stage is the performing stage in which team members begin to see successful outcomes as their energies focus constructively on the joint task. This stage is characterised by productivity, quality decision-making, progression towards the stated goals and personal growth on the part of team members. Internal conflicts are settled, and team performance is optimal and the fifth and final stage of development is called adjourning. Not all teams go through this stage as a team, but at various times of its life key members will leave, or major projects will be completed during this time.

References

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